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IMPERIALISM AND AMERICANISM

By Felix Morley

The demobilization demonstrations in various Army camps overseas have begun to direct attention to an issue which many have heretofore blithely ignored. Put bluntly, this issue is the question of whether the United States as a nation has either the will or the capacity to follow through on the world-wide and indefinite commitments undertaken by our Government.

The extent of the purely military obligations which confront us is indicated by President Truman's statement, in his annual message, that "a year from now we still will need a strength of about 2,000,000, including officers, for the armed forces". It is doubtful if the average citizen has heretofore realized that our foreign policy would require anything like this unprecedented peacetime mobilization.

Permanent withdrawal of 2,000,000 men from productive work is, however, only one instance of the effect of global aspirations on the traditional American way of life. As the President points out, in discussing the budget, the cost of our military establishment for the fiscal year 1947 is estimated at "ten times our expenditures for defense before the war; it amounts to about 10 per cent of our expected national income". This vast unproductive outlay means continued stimulus for those inflationary forces now raising living costs and provoking labor unrest.

Today a large fraction of American manpower is discontentedly idling in Army camps scattered from Iceland to Calcutta. Another large fraction is manning picket lines around closed furnaces and factories at home. Useful production, which alone can replace the waste of war, is not increasing but declining. From shirts to shelter, we are failing to meet domestic needs, let alone those of the Tagalogs, Hottentots and Yugoslavs.

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Meantime, with a lack of realism which would be grotesque if it were not so appallingly serious, official planners continue to shriek vociferously for further extension of an imperialism which the Nation is clearly not in condition to underwrite.

II

An illustration of this reckless attitude is at hand in a speech delivered in New York on January 19 by Spruille Braden, the financier who was recently Ambassador of the United States at Buenos Aires and is now Assistant Secretary of State in charge of Latin American relations.

Without mentioning Argentina by name, but unmistakably defining that nation as his target, Mr. Braden said defensively that "there is nothing in the book of diplomatic etiquette that requires us to embrace the enemies of our way of life". Pulling no punches, he then made pointed references to the "typically fascist" government in this hemisphere; compared its alleged threat to peace with that of Nazi Germany; and argued that the Good Neighbor policy must not be construed as meaning tolerance for an American republic which is governed by such a dictatorship.

Apparently Mr. Braden did not realize, in making this speech, that he was attacking a government which is a fellow Member of the United Nations. His official denunciations, as made public by the Department of State, come perilously close to violating the first paragraph of Article 33 of the San Francisco Charter, which reads:

> "The parties to any dispute, the continuance of which is likely to endanger the maintenance of international peace and security, shall, first of all, seek a solution by negotiation, enquiry, mediation, conciliation, arbitration, judicial settlement, resort to regional agencies or arrangements, or other peaceful means of their own choice."

Very possibly it was a mistake to admit Argentina to full membership, with all rights and privileges, in the United Nations. But this action the present Administration approved at San Francisco last April. Now, regardless of our obligations under the Charter, we are officially threatening a fellow Member of the United Nations with punitive action.

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Just as disturbing is the fact that almost everything charged against this South American government by Mr. Braden applies with equal force to that of Soviet Russia, and therefore can only serve to increase Moscow's legitimate suspicion of our foreign policy. For while the barb was undoubtedly aimed at Peron it must be equally offensive to Stalin to hear an American diplomat attacking a friendly government because it

> " . . . pays lip service to democracy . . . in its pseudo-concern for the laboring masses . . . organizing them into government-controlled unions that are simply instruments of slavery."

III

Unfortunately, Mr. Braden's current outburst is no isolated instance of diplomacy by threat and bluster. With pronounced self-righteousness, at best not a lovable characteristic, we are rapidly establishing ourselves as the world's greatest moralizer on the subject of the conduct of other governments. And many seem to believe that this ceaseless criticism of others is somehow an aspect of constructive international cooperation.

In addition to continuous needling of Argentina we are now officially lecturing the British about Palestine; working to undermine Franco in Spain; pressuring Chiang Kai-shek to "liberalize" China's government with Communists; politely blackmailing Switzerland by making its membership in the United Nations impossible unless the Swiss abandon their traditional policy of neutrality. The last is particularly ironic because, for many generations, the United States was the outstanding defender of the "rights of neutrals".

This provocative attitude, which incidentally indicates complete lack of sincerity in our lip service to orderly international cooperation, could be successful under three conditions. But all those three must be fulfilled.

The first of these conditions is that we must demand uniform adoption of the principles of conduct which we lay down as rules for other governments. If we are officially hostile to government-controlled trade unions, then we must denounce them in Russia as well as in Argentina. In the long run it can only prove disastrous to

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revile dictatorships in weak countries, while appeasing them in strong nations.

In addition to uniformity, an aggressive and hectoring foreign policy must have consistency. The Administration cannot at one moment reaffirm "condemnation of intervention by a State in the internal affairs of another", as in the Act of Chapultepec only last March, and then permit policy-making officials like Mr. Braden to denounce the very position it has indorsed. Our amateur diplomats cannot change the basic principles of foreign policy as though they were pin-stripe trousers.

Finally, a blustering foreign policy must have popular support behind it. Physical power alone is not enough. There must also be a general will to back official pretension with military force.

IV

The major significance of the G. I. demonstrations lies in the evidence that American boys are simply not interested in converting the confused heroics of our diplomacy into deeds. These boys were willing to make any sacrifice -- for 300,000 of them the price was life itself -- during the war. Now they want to come home.

There is similar food for thought in the indications that the American people do not intend to accept peacetime conscription. Far from writing compulsory military training into the statute books, Congress, with a keen eye to the balloting next November, is evidently none too certain about renewing the wartime draft, before the expiration of its operation on May 15.

Finally, as shown by the present wave of strikes in basic industries, organized labor is clearly opposed to that industrial regimentation which is essential to a foreign policy in which guns overseas are deemed more important than butter at home.

In Washington, of course, there are still many unelected officials to whom "globalony" is a sort of intellectual catnip. Events are moving toward a showdown between these advocates of Imperialism and those who intend to keep America a country in which men are raised as citizens instead of as subjects.

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NOT MERELY GOSSIP
A Supplement to HUMAN EVENTS Vol. III - No. 4

The rising pyramid of strikes does not mean revolution in America, but it will certainly foster revolution abroad. Whether or not we might prove to have a sufficient surplus of goods for export, after domestic consumption is taken care of, the American strikes carry a dread message to foreign chancelleries. Without American production and export, governments all over the world face overthrow by their hungry masses.

The resignation of General de Gaulle, following a French meat crisis and the outbreak of the American packing strike, fits into this pattern. Nor was it an accident that Germans, formerly conservative, turned Left in this week's Kreis elections after months of virtually no production and the prospect of scant production for an indefinite time. Finally we have the statement of the former FEA official, Bernard S. Van Benssellaer, that failure of United States exporters to supply sufficient goods to Latin American countries is likely to cause a "crash" with serious political results. And we have failed to allocate goods to these countries, in violation of our promise made at the Mexico City Conference last spring.

The problem of Latin America is the source of a bitter struggle now going on behind the scenes in our Government. State Department planners, who wish to put all power in the UNO, are trying to subordinate our Latin American to a global policy. Pitted against this policy are the Joint Chiefs of Staff and the Inter-American Defense Board, who point out that Chapter VIII of the Charter specifically provides for "Regional Arrangements". The military men argue that we may or may not figuratively "reach Noma with the serum" in time to save European and Asiatic patients, but we should first of all save our sick neighbors. Latin America, they point out, is our nearest bastion in a dangerous world power situation and for military reasons should have first priority in our considerations. The picture is complicated by the fact, as noted in the current HUMAN EVENTS, that in pressuring Argentina the State Department is forgetting our obligations under UNO.

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"Truman is grabbing the wrong handle in the steel and motor strikes", remarks our favorite Labor expert. "He's attempting to deal with President Fairless, who is merely the paid executive of the stockholders. The President should sit down in conference with Tom Lamont of J. P. Morgan and Company and the du Ponts. Morgan and the du Ponts, by their heavy stockholdings, have virtual control of both U. S. Steel and General Motors. Truman would have a better chance of ending the steel and motors strikes, if he would deal with the 'men behind'."

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Prospects of a new government "friendly" to Moscow apparently indicate the progressive liquidation of the Iranian situation. But, if Tehran moves too slowly, Russian intervention may appear next in the Caspian provinces of Manzanderan and Gilan, in the classic infiltration manner made familiar in Azerbaijan. Tehran depends on these two rich agricultural areas for most of its food. If Manzanderan and Gilan follow the course of Azerbaijan then the capitulation of Tehran to Moscow demands is inevitable.

Middle Eastern experts are now looking beyond Iran to Afghanistan for further Russian expansion. It is known that Russian foreign policy has had as one of its objectives the Herat area of that country. The "Azerbaijan technique" seems indicated in Herat, which military strategists consider important in connection with the inexorable Russian advance towards the Persian Gulf.

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The Intelligence Service is the "eyes" of the Army. If the Chief of Staff receives incorrect or misleading information from G2, the Army's "eyes" are figuratively dimmed. Realization of this fact is the cause of doubts concerning the creation of an over-all unified Intelligence Service, now a controversial subject. Intelligence officers believe that unless such an organization has a professional, impartial and

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unprejudiced staff, it will fail in its objectives and work harm to the foreign and military policies of the Government.

These officers point to the condition of Army Intelligence in the latter stages of the war. G2 suffered badly not from conservative "mossbacks" on its staff, as is often asserted, but from politically-minded novices who entered the service after the beginning of the war and who obtained decisive posts through Administration influence. Unwilling to countenance any reports that might be considered critical of Russia, the latter altered, shelved, or suppressed a number of realistic surveys of world political situations which had been prepared by impartial professional experts; thus blocking the presentation of an accurate picture to the Chief of Staff and the White House.

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Despite American attempts to lean over backward in avoiding any possible conflicts between the United States and Russia, the attitude is not reciprocated. A Chinese spokesman in Manchuria, according to the AP, said that American correspondents would not be allowed in Mukden while Soviet troops were there, because the Russians regarded them as "enemies". Whatever truth there may be in this report, it is in line with other reports of the hostility shown towards America by Communists in the Far East (See last week's NMG).

The epithet "enemy" has also been applied to the United States right here in this country, in the Daily Worker on January 2. Joseph Starobin, Foreign Editor, characterizing as a "retreat" the concessions of the United States to Russia in the recent Moscow Conference, said, "But when such immense stakes are involved as war and peace, when such gigantic forces are in motion, the enemy's retreat is very important to us." We have underlined the word "enemy", because it is unusual to have the United States so identified in an American paper.

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Messrs. Maisky and Litvinoff are not up for re-election to the Supreme Soviet, a bit of little-noticed news which is accorded significance by diplomatic observers. These two outstanding figures of Russian foreign policy had disappeared from the stage in the past two years and rested peacefully in positions on the Supreme Soviet. It was assumed that they were thus preserved for a day when the policies they stood for would again come to the fore. Maisky and Litvinoff were exponents of a collective security policy and cooperation with the West. Today, their removal from the wings to at least the wardrobe cellar, if not oblivion, is interpreted as another indication of increasing Russian nationalism. This tendency was noted in the truculent tone of Gromyko's address to the UNO.

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Those who read the strike news and suffer from nightmares about bolshevik revolution and class warfare would be surprised to read an editorial in the January 1 number of "District 50 News", organ of that section of the United Mine Workers of America. In prose only slightly less vernacular than the speech of many union members, the editorial says: "The fight that labor must make in 1946 is not like that of 1919-20 when we had a great postwar union-busting drive. The enemies of labor now are mostly of another kind". The News concedes that a few old "union busters" still survive here and there, but they attract "no worthwhile support and not a great deal of interest".

No, says the News, the enemy is elsewhere today. "What labor has lost in 1945 is due to pretended political friends, burrocrats on the Federal payroll. Closely linked to these double-crossers is a horde of 'bleeding heart' college professors and social workers." These elements, says the News, "are prepared to sacrifice the wage and living standards of the American working people for the benefit of foreign imperialism". Labor is beginning to discover "that it now costs the working people as much, or more, to support 3,500,000 political burrocrats in easy jobs, at high pay, as it has always cost the working people to support the idle rich and financial parasites of Wall Street."

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